



## National Coordinating Center

### Issue Background

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The National Coordinating Center (NCC), under the framework of Executive Order 12472, provides a venue for industry and the Federal Government to jointly respond to national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications requirements. As of April 2006, 33 private companies collaborate with 23 Government agencies in using the NCC's unique organization to support day-to-day operations, coordinate NS/EP responses during crises, and produce emergency response plans and procedures based on lessons learned during actual events. Throughout its history, the NCC's primary mission has been coordinating the restoration and provisioning of communications services for NS/EP users during natural disasters, armed conflicts, and terrorist attacks.

### History of NSTAC Actions

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The Government's growing telecommunications service requirements demanded that it turn to industry for cooperation, and by 1982, industry and Government collectively developed the concept of a National Coordinating Mechanism (NCM) by which the public and private sectors could coordinate NS/EP telecommunications efforts. A year later, the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC) recommended the creation of a National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications to be the operational arm of the NCM. President Ronald Reagan, through Executive Order 12382, officially established the NCC as a direct result of that recommendation on January 3, 1984, with 11 participating telecommunications industry entities, the United States Telephone Association, and representatives from the National Communications System (NCS). The NSTAC membership periodically revisits the NCC's performance by evaluating its mission, information sharing procedures, and effectiveness as changes occurred in the threat, policy, and technological environments.

In 1996, the NSTAC established a task force to consider how changes in the NS/EP environment affected the NCC's mission, organization, and capabilities. Based on the NSTAC's findings, the NSTAC and the NCC updated the *NCC Operating Guidelines* and chartered functions. Given advances in cyber technology, the NSTAC also endorsed the integration of a voluntary electronic intrusion incident information process for the NCC. This function was consistent with the roles established for an information sharing and analysis center (ISAC) under Presidential Decision Directive 63. The NSTAC concluded in a June 1999 report that, in addition to this new capability, the NCC was already performing most of the other functions of an ISAC for the telecommunications sector. The National Security Council agreed with the NSTAC's conclusion and officially recognized the NCC as the Communications ISAC in January 2000.

### Recent NSTAC Activities

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The NSTAC continues to monitor important issues facing the NCC, which now includes representation from 13 NSTAC member companies. In October 2005, the NSTAC created the NCC Task Force (NCCTF) to study the long-term direction of the NCC and to determine how to best facilitate continued cooperation with the Federal Government. The NSTAC also tasked the NCCTF with ascertaining how the sector coordinating council approach developed at the Department of Homeland Security will affect the operation of the NCC. The delivered its final NCC report in May 2006, making numerous recommendations with regard to the future of industry/Government coordination on NS/EP issues.